

The examiner has further issued an election requirement. Of the elected claims, a majority of the claims are clearly generic to the species of Figs. 2, 3, 4, and 5. However, at least claims 1-3, 5, 7, 9, 11-18, 21-26, 28, 29, 34-40, and 42 are supported by the elected species of Fig. 5. In view of the fact that substantially all of the dependent claims are supported by the election of species, it is respectfully submitted that there is no serious burden on the part of the Examiner to examine all of claims 1-18 and 21-42 in a single application.. Indeed, the Examiner has failed to allege any burden whatsoever to the examination of all of these claims together. In view of this, the Examiner is respectfully requested to examine claims 1-18, 21-26, and 28-42 in the present application.

The Examiner is reminded of the substance of the interview conducted on April 4, 2000 in the parent to the present application. During the course of this interview, the Examiner indicated claims 1,3, 21, and 22 distinguish over the art of record. Since all of claims 1-18, 21-26, and 28-42 depend from allowable claims 1, 3, 21, and 22 it is respectfully submitted that all claims are allowed.

Conclusion

If the Examiner has any question concerning this application, the Examiner is requested to contact Michael K. Mutter (Reg. No. 29,680) at (703) 205-8000 in the Washington, D.C. area.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP

By

Michael K. Mutter

Registration No. 29,680

P.O. Box 747

Falls Church, VA 22040-0747

(703) 205-8000

MKM/cms